

## **Amendments to the Claims:**

*This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:*

Claims 1 - 15. (Cancelled)

16. (Currently Amended) A dispersant comprising at least one copolymer prepared by polymerizing a polymerizable mixture consisting essentially of:

- a) 5 to 70 wt. % of one or more monomers selected from the group consisting of ethylenically unsaturated monocarboxylic acids, ethylenically unsaturated carboxamides, ethylenically unsaturated C<sub>4-8</sub> dicarboxylic acids and anhydrides thereof, and (meth)acrylate monoesters of C<sub>2-8</sub> dialcohols;
- b) 1 to 40 wt. % of one or more monomers selected from the group consisting of ethylenically unsaturated compounds with sulfonate or sulfate functional groups,
- c) 10 to 80 wt. % of one or more monomers selected from the group consisting of ethylenically unsaturated compounds of ~~polyethylene~~ homopolyoxyethylene glycols with 1 to 300 ~~ethylene oxide~~ oxyethylene units and terminal groups selected from the group consisting of OH-groups and ether groups -OR' and mixtures thereof, wherein R' is an alkyl, aryl, alkaryl or aralkyl residue with 1 to 40 C atoms,
- d) 5 to 80 wt. % of one or more monomers selected from the group consisting of ethylenically unsaturated compounds of ~~polyalkylene~~ polyoxyalkylene glycols ~~[[with]]~~ consisting of 1 to 300 C<sub>3-4</sub> ~~alkylene oxide~~ oxyalkylene units and terminal groups selected from the group consisting of OH-groups and ether groups -OR' and mixtures thereof, wherein R' is an alkyl, aryl, alkaryl or aralkyl residue with 1 to 40 C atoms, and,
- e) optionally, 0.5 to 10 weight percent of one or more hydrophobic comonomers selected from the group consisting of (meth)acrylate esters of C<sub>1-15</sub> alcohols and vinylaromatics[[.]], said copolymer having pendant polyoxyalkylene moieties derived from monomers c) and d)

the weight percentages based on the total weight of the copolymer, and totaling 100 wt. %.

17. (Previously Presented) The dispersant of claim 16, wherein the monomer units a) include one or more monomers selected from the group consisting of acrylic acid, methacrylic acid, itaconic acid, fumaric acid, maleic acid, and the salts of these carboxylic acids, maleic anhydride, acrylamide, methacrylamide, hydroxyethyl(meth)acrylate, hydroxypropyl(meth)acrylate and hydroxybutyl(meth)acrylate.

18. (Previously Presented) The dispersant of claim 16, wherein the monomer units b) include one or more monomers selected from the group consisting of vinylsulfonic acid and alkali and alkaline earth metal salts thereof, styrenesulfonic acid and alkali and alkaline earth metal salts thereof, methallylsulfonic acid and alkali and alkaline earth metal salts thereof, p-methallyloxyphenylsulfonic acid and alkali and alkaline earth metal salts thereof, and sulfonic acids of the general formula  $\text{CH}_2=\text{CR}^1-\text{CO}-\text{X}-\text{CR}^2\text{R}^3-\text{R}^4-\text{SO}_3\text{H}$  and alkali and alkaline earth metal salts thereof, wherein  $\text{X} = \text{O}$  or  $\text{NH}$ , and  $\text{R}^1$ ,  $\text{R}^2$  and  $\text{R}^3$  are the same or different and have the meaning H and  $\text{C}_1$  to  $\text{C}_3$  alkyl, and  $\text{R}^4$  is  $\text{C}_1$  to  $\text{C}_4$  alkylene.

19. (Currently Amended) The dispersant of claim 16, wherein the monomer units c) include one or more monomers selected from the group consisting of acrylate esters and methacrylate esters of ~~polyethylene~~ polyoxyethylene glycols and  $\text{C}_{1-6}$  ~~[[and]]~~ alkyl ethers of polyoxyethylene glycols thereof; the polyethylene glycol containing 1 to 150 ~~ethylene oxide-~~ derived oxyethylene units, the polyoxyethylene glycols having a terminal -OH or -OR' group.

20. (Currently Amended) The dispersant of claim 16, wherein the monomer units d) include one or more monomers selected from the group consisting of acrylate esters and methacrylate esters of ~~polypropylene~~ polyoxypropylene glycols and ~~polybutylene~~ polyoxybutylene glycols and  $\text{C}_{1-6}$  alkyl ethers ~~thereof~~ of polyoxypropylene glycols and polyoxybutylene glycols, the polyoxypropylene and polyoxybutylene glycols terminated with -OH or -OR' groups, the polyoxypropylene and polyoxybutylene glycols containing 3 to 100 alkylene oxide-derived units.

21. (Currently Amended) The dispersant of claim 16, the monomer units d) include one or more monomers selected from the group consisting of acrylate esters and

methacrylate esters of polypropylene polyoxypropylene glycols and polybutylene polyoxybutylene glycols which contain 3 to 35 propylene oxide-derived or butylene oxide-derived units respectively, capped with 5 to 80 ethylene oxide-derived units, the copolymer being insoluble in water but soluble in aqueous alkali.

22. (Currently Amended) The dispersant of claim 16, wherein hydrophobic comonomer units e), which are (meth)acrylate esters of alcohols with 1 to 15 C atoms or vinylaromatics, are also used as comonomers.

23. (Previously Presented) The dispersant of claim 16, when employed in self-leveling, hydraulically setting mixtures, on loading in the linear viscoelastic region the storage modulus  $G'$  is higher than the loss modulus  $G''$ , on loading outside the linear viscoelastic region a tangent of the loss angle of  $< 80$  results, and on subsequent relaxation within less than 15 mins the storage modulus  $G'$  is again higher than the loss modulus  $G''$ .

24. (Previously Presented) In a process for the spray drying of aqueous polymer dispersions of homo- or copolymers of one or more monomers selected from the group consisting of vinyl esters of unbranched or branched alkylcarboxylic acids with 1 to 18 C atoms, acrylate esters and methacrylate esters of branched and unbranched alcohols with 1 to 15 C atoms, dienes, olefins, vinylaromatics and vinyl halides, in which a dispersant is employed, the improvement comprising selecting as at least one dispersant, a dispersant of claim 16.

25. (Previously Presented) In a hydraulically settable mortar composition wherein a cement plasticizer is employed, the improvement comprising selecting as at least one cement plasticizer, a dispersant of claim 16.

26. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 24, wherein the dispersant is an atomization aid in the spray drying of aqueous dispersions of vinyl acetate homopolymers, copolymers of vinyl acetate with ethylene, copolymers of vinyl acetate with ethylene and one or more other vinyl esters, copolymers of vinyl acetate with ethylene and acrylate esters, copolymers

of vinyl acetate with ethylene and vinyl chloride, styrene-acrylate ester copolymers, and/or styrene-1,3-butadiene copolymers.

27. (Previously Presented) A construction chemical composition containing at least one hydraulically setting binder selected from the group consisting of Portland cement, aluminate cement, trass cement, slag cement, magnesia cement, phosphate cement, gypsum, lime, and waterglass, further comprising at least one dispersant of claim 16.

28. (Previously Presented) The composition of claim 27, which is a self-leveling floor filler or flowable screed.

29. (Previously Presented) The composition of claim 27, wherein said dispersant exhibits a plasticizing action.

30. (New) The dispersant of claim 16 which is insoluble in water but soluble in aqueous alkali.

31. (New) The dispersant of claim 16, wherein monomer  
d) is an ethylenically unsaturated compound of a homopolyoxypropylene glycol with a terminal -OH group or -OR' group.

32. (New) The dispersant of claim 16, wherein monomer  
d) is an ethylenically unsaturated compound of a homopolyoxybutylene glycol with a terminal -OH group or -OR' group.